

Department of Permits Approvals and Inspections
111 West Chesapeake Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204
Baltimore County, Maryland

In the Matter of

Civil Citation No. 99340

Karen & Ralph Krach
541 Compass Rd
Baltimore, MD 21220

24 Compass Rd

Respondent

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
FINAL ORDER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

This matter came before the Administrative Law Judge on September 21, 2011 for a Hearing on a citation for violations under the Baltimore County Code (BCC). The Respondent was charged with violating BCC § 13-7-401, failure to keep grass cut to three (3) inches in height, and BCC § 13-7-310, failure to remove all trash, junk and debris on residential property located at 24 Compass Road.

On September 6, 2011, pursuant to § 3-6-205, Baltimore County Code, Inspector George Williams issued a Code Enforcement & Inspections Citation. The citation was sent to the Respondent by 1st class mail to the last known address listed in the Maryland State Tax Assessment files.

The citation proposed a civil penalty of \$1,600.00 (One thousand six hundred dollars).

The following persons appeared for the Hearing and testified: Karen Krach (Owner), Valarie Coursey (tenant); George Williams, Baltimore County Code Enforcement Officer.

Inspector Williams testified he observed tall grass and trash/debris at the above premises, and has visited the premises on several occasions. He advised he was unable to enter the fenced rear yard, but he submitted photos of the property which substantiate his testimony. Mr. Williams advised that conditions have improved, but he testified that he conducted a re-inspection on September 19, 2011, and noted the property was still not in compliance.

Karen Krach testified, and stated she owned the property and that her daughter, Ms. Coursey, resided in the home. She stated she has owned the property for many years and has not received any complaints concerning its condition or upkeep. Ms. Coursey stated that she is recently separated from her husband, who took with him her lawnmower and other yard tools, which has made it difficult to keep up with the grass cutting and other outside maintenance. Both Ms. Krach and Ms. Coursey appeared to be sincere and honest, and Mr. Williams advised that both have been cooperative and helpful. As such, I am inclined to be lenient in this instance, with the hope that the parties strive to keep the home and grounds in good condition.

THEREFORE:

IT IS ORDERED by the Administrative Law Judge that a civil penalty be imposed in the amount of \$ 1,600 (One thousand six hundred).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that \$1,550 of the \$1,600 civil penalty be suspended, with an immediate \$50 fine imposed at this time. If not paid within 30 days of billing, the \$50 penalty shall be placed as a lien upon the premises.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the suspended \$ 1,550 civil penalty be automatically imposed without the need for further Hearing or Order if the property is not brought into compliance by October 23, 2011.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the suspended \$ 1,550 civil penalty be automatically imposed if there is a subsequent finding against the Respondent for the same violation within one year of the date of this Order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the County inspect the property to determine whether the violations have been corrected.

ORDERED this 23rd day of September 2011

Signed: Original signed 09/23/11
John E. Beverunge
Administrative Law Judge

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT: The Respondent is advised that pursuant to §3-6-301(a) of the Baltimore County Code, the Respondent may appeal this order to the Baltimore County Board of Appeals within fifteen (15) days from the date of this order; any such appeal requires the filing of a petition setting forth the grounds for appeal, payment of a filing fee of \$150 and the posting of security in the amount of the penalty assessed.

JEB/jaf